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Message Text

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12
ORIGIN NEA-13

INFO OCT-01 EUR-25 ISO-00 AF-10 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-07 H-03

INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-10 PA-04 RSC-01 PRS-01 SPC-03

SS-20 USIA-15 SAM-01 EB-11 ACDA-19 SAJ-01 (ISO) R

DRAFTED BY NEA/INS:JELEADER:HME
APPROVED BY NEA:SSOBER
PM/ISO-JDEWENTER(SUBS)
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R 120007Z FEB 74
FM SECSTATE WASHDC
TO AMEMBASSY COLOMBO
INFO AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI
AMEMBASSY LONDON
CINCPAC HONOLULU

C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 027982

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PFOR, CE, MARR, IO
SUBJECT: CEYLONESE AMBASSADOR'S CALL TO DELIVER
PRIMIN'S LETTER ON DIEGO GARCIA

1. BEGIN SUMMARY: CEYLONESE AMBASSADOR KANAKARATNE FEB. 11 DELIVERED TO DEPUTY ASSISTANT SECRETARY SOBER LETTER FROM PRIMIN BANDARANAIKE TO PRESIDENT EXPRESSING "DEEP CONCERN" OVER DIEGO GARCIA EXPANSION. AMBASSADOR EMPHASIZED GSL WOULD NOT PUBLISH LETTER THOUGH PRIMIN PROBABLY WOULD HAVE TO ANNOUNCE THAT LETTER ON SUBJECT DIEGO GARCIA WAS SENT. SOBER EXPRESSED US APPRECIATION FOR RESTRAINED AND FRIENDLY WAY GSL WAS MAKING ITS VIEWS KNOWN TO US. HE FURTHER BRIEFED AMBASSADOR ON SUBJECT ALONG LINES STATE 19914, PARAS 2, 3, 4. END SUMMARY

2. FEB. 11 AMBASSADOR KANAKARATNE DELIVERED TO SOBER LETTER FROM PRIMIN BANDARANAIKE TO PRESIDENT EXPRESSING "DEEP CONCERN" OVER PROPOSED IMPROVEMENTS TO DIEGO GARCIA.
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(TEXT FOLLOWS) AMBASSADOR SAID SIMILAR LETTER

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BEING SENT TO UK PRIME MINISTER. IN HANDING OVER LETTER AMBASSADOR EMPHASIZED HIS GRATITUDE FOR FEB. 4 TELEPHONE BRIEFING HE RECEIVED FROM SOBER ON THIS ISSUE.

3. AMBASSADOR SAID GSL WILL NOT PUBLISH TEXT OF MESSAGE IN KEEPING WITH LOW-KEY CEYLONESE RESPONSE TO US ACTION

ON TWO OCCASIONS PREVIOUSLY: 1971 USS ENTERPRISE ENTRY AND 1973 USS HANCOCK EXERCISE. PRIMIN WILL HAVE TO PUBLICIZE FACT SHE HAS SENT LETTER BECAUSE LEADERS OF MAJOR LITTORAL POWERS (INDIA, AUSTRALIA, INDONESIA) ARE MAKING STATEMENTS ON DIEGO GARCIA AND BECAUSE OF SRI LANKA'S LEADERSHIP IN INDIAN OCEAN PEACE ZONE PROPOSAL. AMBASSADOR EMPHASIZED RESTRAINT OF PRIME MINISTER IN AVOIDING UNDUE PUBLICITY OF GSL REACTIONS PARTICULARLY IN VIEW INEVITABLE OPPOSITION QUESTIONS ABOUT CEYLONESE INDIAN OCEAN POLICY IN CONTEXT DIEGO GARCIA EXPANSION.

4. SOBER RESPONDED THAT WE INDEED APPRECIATE THE CONSTRUCTIVE AND FRIENDLY MANNER IN WHICH THE PRIME MINISTER HAS CONVEYED HER VIEWS TO US AND THE RESTRAINT WHICH THE GSL HAS SHOWN IN ITS HANDLING OF THE DIEGO GARCIA ISSUE. THE US IS AWARE THAT THE CEYLONESE MAY HAVE CONCERNS ABOUT THE EXPANSION AND WE WELCOME OPPORTUNITY FOR FRANK DISCUSSION BETWEEN OUR TWO GOVERNMENTS, (AS AGAINST RECOURSE TO PUBLIC RECRIMINATIONS). THIS IS IN KEEPING WITH BOTH CEYLONESE AND AMERICAN INTERESTS IN SHARING VIEWS ON IMPORTANT QUESTIONS. AMBASSADOR NOTED THAT THE PRIMIN HAD MADE CLEAR TO PRESIDENT AND SECSTATE DURING HER 1971 VISIT THAT US AND SRI LANKA SHOULD AVOID AGGREVATING PROBLEMS WITH UNNECESSARY PUBLIC STATEMENTS ON THEM. SOBER SAID WE WOULD PROMPTLY DELIVER PRESIDENT'S LETTER TO WHITE HOUSE.

5. SOBER THEN WENT ON TO AMPLIFY HIS FEB. 5 TELEPHONE CONVERSATION WITH DETAILED BRIEFING RE RATIONALE OF DIEGO GARCIA EXPANSION ALONG LINES STATE 19914, PARAS 2, 3, 4. NOTED WE ARE NOT ESTABLISHING A BASE BUT CONFIDENTIAL

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RATHER DEVELOPING A CAPABILITY TO SUPPORT US UNITS IN AREA. SOBER EMPHASIZED WE DO NOT WISH CONTRIBUTE TO US-SOVIET COMPETITION THOUGH DIEGO GARCIA EXPANSION IS IN WAY A RESPONSE TO ACTUAL INCREASE IN SOVIET SHIP UNITS AND TO INCREASED SOVIET POTENTIAL IN INDIAN OCEAN FROM ANTICIPATED REOPENING OF SUEZ. AMBASSADOR COMMENTED HE HAD REPORTED BACK TO COLOMBO SOBER'S FEB. 5 STATEMENT THAT THERE ARE NO PLANS FOR BASING US

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MILITARY UNITS AT DIEGO GARCIA AND SOBER CONFIRMED
THIS. AMBASSADOR ACCEPTED SOBER'S REAFFIRMATION OF STRONG
USG DESIRE FOR SECURITY AND STABILITY IN THE INDIAN
OCEAN AREA AND SPECIFICALLY FOR CONTINUED FRIENDLY
RELATIONS WITH GSL. KISSINGER

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Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 12 FEB 1974
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: golinofr
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
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Document Unique ID: 00
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Enclosure: n/a
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